Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006

Message Text

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PAGE 01 KABUL 02105 070615Z

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C O N F I D E N T I A L KABUL 2105

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: US, VS, PFOR, AF
SUBJ: PRESIDENT DAOUD'S VIEWS ON VIET-NAM

1. DURING MY MEETING WITH HIM APRIL 6 I DISCUSSED THE CURRENT SITUATION IN VIET-NAM WITH PRESIDENT DAOUD. I STRESSED THAT WHILE THE FORD ADMINISTRATION CONTINUES TO SEEK ADDITIONAL MILITARY ASSISTANCE FROM THE CONGRESS WE ARE CONCENTRATING AT THE MOMENT ON MEETING THE ENORMOUS HUMANITARIAN NEEDS PRESENTED BY THE FLOW OF REFUGEES. I DREW ON PRESIDENT FORD'S APRIL 3 SPEECH IN SAN DIEGO TO UNDERLINE THAT IN THE CURRENT CONFUSED SITUATION IN VIET-NAM OUR FRIENDS SHOULD UNDERSTAND THAT WE WILL CONTINUE TO HONOR OUR COMMITMENTS TO THEM.

2. IN A LENGTHY RESPONSE, PRESIDENT DAOUD SAID THAT HE HAD NEVER UNDERSTOOD WHY WE HAD BECOME INVOLVED IN VIET-NAM IN THE FIRST PLACE, THAT OUR INTERVENTION HAD, IF ANYTHING, MADE COMMUNIST CONTROL OVER THAT COUNTRY EASIER AND THAT OUR BASIC MISTAKE HAD BEEN SUPPORT A CORRUPT GOVERNMENT HAT DID NOT HAVE THE SUPPORT OF ITS PEOPLE. HE EXPRESSED THE HOPE THAT WE WOULD NOT ONCE AGAIN INTERVENE MILITARILY AND THAT WE COULD INSTALL IN POWER, IN PLACE OF THIEU, AMAN WHO WOULD BE AMODERATE AND WHO COULD CONDUCT NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE OTHER SIDE.

3. I TOLD DAOUD THAT I COULD SEE NO EVIDENCE THAT THE
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PAGE 02 KABUL 02105 070615Z

AMERICAN PEOPLE WOULD SUPPORT RENEWED LARGE SCALE AMERICAN

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006

MILITARY INTERVENTION. I FURTHER STATED THAT IT WOULD BE EXT-
TREMELY DIFFICULT TO GET A NEGOTIATION STARTED WHEN ONE SIDE
HAD SUCH A CLEAR UPPER HAND AS THE NORTH VIETNAMESE APPARENTLY
HAVE. REVIEWING THE PHILOSOPHICAL BACKGROUND WHICH LED
US TO INTERVENE IN VIET-NAM IN THE FIRST PLACE, I TOLD DAOUD
THAT I THOUGHT ALL COUNTRIES IN THE WORLD SHOULD BE CONCERNED
WHENEVER AGGRESSION TAKES PLACE AND WHENEVER INTERNATIONAL
ACCORDS ARE VIOLATED AS THE NORTH VIETNAMESE HAVE BEEN VIOLATING
THE PARIS AGREEMENT OF JANUARY 1973.

4. IN CONCLUSION, DAOUD SAID THAT HE WANTED TO STRESS THAT OUR
MAJOR ERROR HAD BEEN TO SUPPORT A REGIME THAT DID NOT HAVE THE
SUPPORT OF TIS OWN PEOPLE. THE TWICE REPEATED THAT HIS CRITICISM
OF OUR POLICY WAS BEING MADE BY A SINCERE FRIEND OF THE UNITED
STATES AND THAT HE HOPED WE WOULD TAKE IT IN THAT SPIRIT. AS
IN THE CASE OF OUR CONVERSATION ABOUT THE MIDDLE EAST, HE
SEEMED SOMEWHAT FLATTERED TO HAVE HIS VIEWS SOLICITED.

5. DEPARTMENT REPEAT AS DESIRED.
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